

# Memorandum



**To:** News Agencies

**From:** Gordon H. Gartner, Chief of Police

**Date:** 8/19/05

**Re:** News Release Reference Department of Public Safety Officer Charlie Hopkins  
Being Critically Injured in a Hit and Run Alcohol Related Accident in Payson,  
AZ.

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On August 18, 2005 at approximately 9:35 p.m. officers of the Payson Police Department responded to a report of a pedestrian accident on Highway 87 located just north of the intersection of BIA/101, which is the traffic light that regulates traffic into the Mazatzal Casino area. Upon arrival on the scene officers discovered an individual that had been critically injured in a ditch located on the east side of Highway 87 just north of BIA/101. Medical personnel responded to the scene and the injured pedestrian, who was later identified as Department of Public Safety Officer Charlie Hopkins, was subsequently transported via helicopter to a Phoenix area hospital.

The vehicle involved in striking Mr. Hopkins, who was walking northbound on the sidewalk on Highway 87, left the scene of an accident. A witness in the area of the Mazatzal Casino provided the police department with a description of the suspect vehicle. Officers from the Payson Police Department, as well as officers from the Tonto Apache Police Department and Security personnel from the Mazatzal Casino, had been in contact with subjects in a very similarly described vehicle approximately one half hour prior to this incident. The subjects contacted by the officers in the earlier call, were contacted because they were showing signs of intoxication and therefore would not be allowed to enter the casino. At that time officers identified one of the individuals as a Mr. Reed Hatch, 22, of Payson, Arizona. There was no crime to arrest Mr. Hatch for at this time, therefore officers ordered him not to drive due to his intoxicated state. He was then placed onto a golf cart type transport vehicle in one area of the casino and driven to the shuttle bus parked near the entrance of the casino. Subsequent investigation reveals that Mr. Hatch did not board the shuttle bus and left the casino driving northbound. Upon leaving the parking lot in his vehicle, Casino Security reported to the Payson Police Department that a suspected DUI driver had just left their location.

After the discovery of the accident, officers of the Payson Police Department responded to a residence that Mr. Hatch is known to frequent and discovered his vehicle in the driveway. Investigation revealed that there was extensive damage to the vehicle, and Mr. Hatch made statements indicating that he was the driver of the vehicle. Mr. Hatch

*September 2, 2005*

was eventually taken into custody for the crime of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon as well as leaving the scene of an injury accident, both of which are felonies.

Officers of the Department of Public Safety's Vehicle Crimes Unit, as well as officers from the Special Investigation Unit responded to Payson to assist in conducting the investigation. Mr. Hatch is currently in custody with a \$25,000.00 bond.

GHG/kb

